First Lady Calls for Congress to Hold Public Hearing With Epstein Victims

April 9, 2026 **by Dan McCue**

First Lady Melania Trump on Thursday called on Congress to provide Jeffrey Epstein's victims with an opportunity to tell their stories to American people. (Photo by Dan McCue)

WASHINGTON —— First Lady Melania Trump urged Congress on Thursday to hold a public hearing at which victims of the late sexual predator Jeffrey Epstein can testify under oath how he and many of his associates abused them.

"The lies regarding Jeffrey Epstein have to end," she said at the outset of a five-minute statement delivered in the Grand Foyer of the White House.

Congress, Trump said, owed it to each of these women to "have her day to tell her story in public if she wishes, and then have her

testimony permanently entered into the Congressional Record."

Prior to the first lady's appearance, speculation had run high about what the nature of her statement would be.

The last time Trump appeared behind a podium in the Grand Foyer, in October, she had revealed her successful back-channel effort to get Russian President Vladimir Putin to help reunite dislocated Ukraine children with their families.

Earlier this week, Trump had applauded the first conviction under the Take It Down Act, a law she'd championed to combat the proliferation of nonconsensual and sexually explicit "deepfakes" on the internet.

But no one in the press pool came even close to guessing that the first lady would address the Epstein matter, much less put it right back on the nation's front pages.

Trump began her remarks Thursday by assailing those she said had spread "lies linking me with Jeffrey Epstein."

"The individuals lying about me are devoid of ethical standards, humility and respect," she said. "I do not object to their ignorance, but rather, I reject their mean-spirited attempts to defame me by implication."

Trump then stated unequivocally that neither she nor her husband, the president, were ever friends with Epstein.

"Donald and I were invited to the same parties as Epstein from time to time, since overlapping in social circles is common in New York City and Palm Beach," she said.

"I never had a relationship with Epstein or his companion, Ghislaine Maxwell, and my polite response to her email cannot be

categorized as anything more than casual correspondence," she continued.

Trump also refuted suggestions on the internet that it was Epstein who introduced her to her future husband.

"I met my husband by chance at a New York City party in 1998," she said. "This initial encounter with my husband is documented in detail in my book, 'Melania.'"

In her book, Trump said that it was Paolo Zampolli, an Italian modeling agent, who introduced her to the future president at a New York night spot.

"The first time I crossed paths with Epstein was in the year 2000, at an event Donald and I attended together," she continued.

"At the time, I had never met Epstein before and had no knowledge of his criminal undertakings," she said, angrily adding that "numerous fake images and statements have been circulating on social media for years now."

"These images and stories are completely false," she said.

The first lady's statement was all the more stunning because of the way the Epstein scandal — and the Justice Department's botched handling of it — have long dogged the president.

But her tone alone spoke volumes. She is clearly a woman who has had enough with being associated with the matter.

"I am not a witness in any connection with any of Epstein's crimes. My name has never appeared in court documents, victim statements or in FBI interviews surrounding the Epstein matter," Trump said.

"I never had any knowledge of Epstein's abuse and I was never involved in any capacity. I was not a participant, and I never visited his private island," the first lady continued.

She went on to point out that she has never been accused or convicted of a crime in connection with Epstein's sex trafficking, abuse of minors, "and other repulsive behavior," and accused those of making "false smears" against her of being either politically motivated or simply wanting to make a buck off sullying her good name with "baseless lies."

Trump said she and her attorneys have actively pushed back against "these lies" and will continue to do so "without hesitation."

She went on to note that Democrat operative James Carville, the Daily Beast and the publishing house HarperCollins have all been forced to publicly apologize and retract Epstein-related statements that have harmed her reputation.

"It's time for Congress to act," Trump said.

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